

Message Text

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SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT NEW YORK TIMES EDITORIAL, THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 19, HEADED "GOOD START IN CARACAS."
2. SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER HAS MADE A GOOD BEGINNING IN HIS LATEST EFFORT TO PLACE UNITED STATES RELATIONS WITH THE COUNTRIES OF LATIN AMERICA ON A SOUNDER AND MORE BUSINESSLIKE BASIS. IN A MAJOR SPEECH AT CARACAS, FIRST STOP OF HIS SIX-COUNTRY TOUR, MR. KISSINGER FOLLOWED HIS OWN ADVICE TO "PUT ASIDE SLOGANS AND TURN FROM RHETORIC," ENDAVORING INSTEAD TO RESPOND TO SPECIFIC DEMANDS IN AID AND TRADE POLICY MADE ON THIS COUNTRY BY THE LATIN AMERICAN GOVERNMENTS.
3. THE SECRETARY WAS PRUDENT IN HIS PLEDGES, TAKING NOTE OF PAST LATIN AMERICAN FRUSTRATION ARISING FROM "LOFTY PROMISES" BY WASHINGTON, WHICH SUBSEQUENTLY WERE "UNDONE BY THE GRADUALISM OF THE AMERICAN POLITICAL SYSTEM." BUT HE PROMISED TO HELP THE MORE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES COMPETE FOR INTERNATIONAL MARKETS ON A MORE EQUAL BASIS, ENDORSED

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PRODUCER-CONSUMER COOPERATION IN SPECIFIC COMMODITIES, AND

PROMISED CONTINUATION OF BILATERAL AID TO THE POOREST COUNTRIES OF THE HEMISPHERE.

4. PERHAPS MORE IMPORTANT FOR THE LONGER RUN, MR. KISSINGER PROMISED WASHINGTON COOPERATION WITH THE NEW LATIN AMERICAN ECONOMIC SYSTEM (S.E.L.A.), AN ENTITY FOR PROMOTING ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AND COORDINATION. S.E.L.A. WAS DELIBERATELY ORGANIZED OUTSIDE THE ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES IN ORDER TO EXCLUDE THE UNITED STATES BUT INCLUDE CUBA AMONG 25 LATIN AMERICAN MEMBERS. MR. KISSINGER EVEN SUGGESTED THAT S.E.L.A. MIGHT PROPOSE PRACTICAL MEANS FOR THE TRANSFER OF TECHNOLOGY TO THE LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES.

5. IT WOULD HAVE BEEN IMPOLITIC FOR MR. KISSINGER, WHILE A GUEST IN A COUNTRY THAT HAS RESTORED RELATIONS WITH FIDEL CASTRO, TO HAVE REFERRED TO WASHINGTON'S CONCERN ABOUT CUBA'S MASSIVE MILITARY INTERVENTION IN ANGOLA. HE WISELY CONFINED HIMSELF TO REITERATING THIS COUNTRY'S COMMITMENT TO THE RIO TREATY, RECALLING ITS REGIONAL SECURITY PROVISIONS "AGAINST THOSE WHO WOULD SEEK TO UNDERMINE SOLIDARITY, THREATEN INDEPENDENCE OR EXPORT VIOLENCE."

6. MUCH OF WHAT MR. KISSINGER SAID WAS NOT NEW. HE HAD LISTED SOME OF THE SAME GOALS FOR HEMISPHERIC COOPERATION IN LAUNCHING HIS OFTEN-INTERRUPTED "DIALOGUE" WITH LATIN AMERICAN FOREIGN MINISTERS IN MEXICO TWO YEARS AGO. "THE SPIRIT OF TLATELOLCO," AS HE THEN DESCRIBED THE CORDIAL ATMOSPHERE IN THE MEXICO CITY SUBURB WHERE THE MEETING WAS HELD, SOON EVAPORATED, PARTLY BECAUSE THERE WAS LITTLE FOLLOW-THROUGH BY WASHINGTON.

7. A COMPARABLE HIATUS THIS TIME WOULD BE MORE COSTLY FOR THE UNITED STATES -- ESPECIALLY AFTER MR. KISSINGER'S POSITIVE START IN VENEZUELA. (END TEXT) INGERSOLL

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